

Trio Uganda

Safeguarding Policy

Part 1: Wales-based work (see page 4 for Overseas Safeguarding Policy)

The purpose of this policy is to protect all people, particularly women, girls, boys and at-risk adults and project participants, from any harm that may be caused due to contact with Trio Uganda. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with Trio Uganda
- The design and implementation of Trio Uganda's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by Trio Uganda, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Trio Uganda or associated personnel.

What is safeguarding?

In Wales, safeguarding means preventing and protecting children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In the international development sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, particularly women, girls, boys, and adults at risk, from harm that arises from contact with our staff or programmes.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

Scope

- All staff contracted by Trio Uganda
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Trio Uganda, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians

Policy Statement

Trio Uganda believes that everyone we encounter, regardless of sex, age, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Trio Uganda will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

Trio Uganda commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention

Trio Uganda will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming with Trio Uganda. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Staff responsibilities

All Trio Uganda staff, grant recipients and partners are prohibited from engaging in the following harmful behaviour, including but not limited to:

- Any behaviour or activity that could amount to sexual exploitation and abuse
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- Any other activity that is intended to cause physical or emotional harm, humiliation or exploitation to any individual.
- Any activity, practice or behaviour that suggests staff, grant recipients or partners have abused their position of power and is engaging any individual based on inherently unequal power dynamics.
- Sexual relationships between staff-, grant recipients-, partners and any individuals that are based on unequal power dynamics are prohibited since they may undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of Trio Uganda.

Enabling reports

Trio Uganda will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by our open Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) process.

Trio Uganda will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Any complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should be reported immediately to the Chair of Trustees (Focal Point). If the complainant does not feel comfortable reporting to their Safeguarding Focal Point, or if that person is implicated in the concern, they may report to any other appropriate trustee.

Response

Trio Uganda will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations

Trio Uganda will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor. Where the survivor is a child or otherwise unable to make decisions, support will be provided by an appropriate guardian or carer.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

Associated policies: Code of Conduct

Part 2

Trio Uganda

Overseas Safeguarding Policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect children, vulnerable persons, and volunteers during working visits to Uganda. This policy applies to all UK trustees & volunteers or anyone working on behalf of the charity. It is also the guide policy for local partners.

Recent high profile cases of serious safeguarding failures by NGOs emphasise the need for overseas organisations to protect beneficiaries and staff from sexual exploitation, physical and mental abuse, and harassment. Trio Uganda is committed to the protection of all and operates a safeguarding policy that ensures all UK volunteers are DBS checked for UK-based activity and possess a current International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) for visits overseas.

All Ugandan partners working with Trio Uganda have demonstrated their commitment to safeguarding and understand the need for meaningful procedures and accountability to protect those at risk. Our Ugandan partners work in communities affected by domestic violence, trafficking, child abuse and sexual exploitation. In the communities where we work, extreme incidents of ritual mutilation and child murder have increased in recent years.

Trio Uganda and all its partners will ensure that criminal acts in Uganda are reported to - and investigated by - local statutory authorities with the expectation that such authorities will carry out their work transparently and diligently, free from corruption, collusion, bias, and favouritism. All incidents, reports and concerns should also be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

The charity's wider Safeguarding policy underwrites this policy and additionally refers to UK law and procedures. In addition to that policy, trio Uganda will:

- maintain awareness of national and local guidance and follow appropriate local safeguarding procedures
- provide effective safeguarding management for volunteers and local CBO staff through supervision, support and training, and act on all complaints
- recruit trustees and other volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- share and update information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers of all UK and Uganda partners
- share concerns with UK, Ugandan agencies and the trustees or lead of any NGO involved
- record all concerns through charity and partner recording procedures,
- report concerns to appropriate statutory authorities and comply with procedures

Date of adoption: March 1st, 2022. Policy review: March 2023

Glossary of Terms

Project participant

Someone who directly receives goods or services from Trio Uganda's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community or other organisations, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child

A person below the age of 18

Child at risk

This describes an individual under the age of 18 years who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect, or other kinds of harm; and who has needs for care and support, whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs. (Wales Social Care and Wellbeing Act 2014).

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name-calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement, and isolation

Abuse

This describes physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, or financial abuse (and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place). Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, Wales

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Safeguarding

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In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes. One donor definition is as follows:

‘Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.’

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners, and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for a response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

Sexual abuse

The term ‘sexual abuse’ means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term ‘sexual exploitation’ means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Harassment

Any behaviour calculated to cause alarm or distress in a reasonable person. Intentionally ‘putting people in fear of violence’. Can include forced communications, bullying and intimidating behaviour.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term ‘survivor’ is often used in preference to ‘victim’ as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however, it is the individual’s choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Adult at risk

Sometimes also referred to as a vulnerable adult.

Describes anyone over 18 years of age who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those

needs), and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. (S 126 of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, Wales)